

TERRI SHUCK INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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INTERVIEWEE: Terri Shuck
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TS: Terri Shuck (Interviewee)

CT: Tell me about Lewisburg.

TS: Lewisburg is a great little town. It's not real big, but we have a lot or really nice little shops in town, a real variety of antique stores, a lot of galleries, gift shops, several restaurants. Lewisburg was voted, "The Coolest Small Town in America."

CT: I know, that's interesting, I saw a sign on the way into town. For the tape, please state your full name and the number of years you've been doing hair.

TS: Well my given name is Teresa, no one calls me Teresa, my friends call me Terri. I graduated from high school in June of 1979 and started [cosmetology] school about two weeks later and I've been doing hair now for thirty-two years.

CT: Amazing. Where were you born?

TS: I was born in Raleigh county but grew up in Greenbrier county, still here in West Virginia.

CT: How far is Raleigh county?

TS: You'll be staying there tonight if you're staying in Beckley, that's Raleigh county.

CT: So that's where you went to school?

TS: It is.

CT: Why did you choose to become a hairdresser?

TS: Well I used to really like, I still do like to draw and paint. I was kind of an artsy type you know [chuckle], I liked to do that a lot. My mother though, was very instrumental in my job choice. I always liked to fool with hair growing up. I'd brush her hair and fix it and so forth. When I was in school at first I thought I might go to art school, maybe to an art institute or something but I wanted to stay in this area and there's not a lot of call for commercial artists in Lewisburg, West Virginia. So my mother suggested that I go to beauty school since I liked that too and it's very creative. So that's what I decided to do. In West Virginia you have to have 2,000 hours, which is roughly a year.

CT: Do you still do art?

TS: I do.

CT: Do you ever wonder or wish you had taken that path?

TS: Occasionally but I'm very happy with what I do. I mean I really am, it's a good profession, it's not always easy but it's a good profession. It's very creative. Even though I'm doing essentially the same thing all day long, it's different all day long because every head of hair is different, the person is different, and after thirty-two years, in a small town you have a really devoted clientele, they're very good friends as well. I love coming to work everyday. And it's so good to have a job where people want to come and see me and it's so nice to make women feel good about themselves. You know it's so nice to see someone leave with a smile on their face and to feel really good. It's a very rewarding job.

CT: That's great. Can you talk about Don McCoy [from the pre-questionnaire interview] form she had filled out] and what he taught you?

TS: Sure. At the time I graduated from beauty school, which was in 1980 Don owned a place called The Esquire. At that time that was pretty much the premier salon, everyone wanted to go to Esquire and everyone wanted to work at Esquire. Well, I happened to go to school with his wife at the time and through her I ended up going to work at The Esquire. Don was a barber. He was a wonderful educator. He had several employees. I felt very fortunate that I got to work there because when I went to work for him was when I saw how much I did not know. In beauty school I learned just the basics but Don was really big on education. Every weekend, we were there all weekend long either he would have someone come to the salon to teach us or we would drive somewhere to a show. So nearly every weekend for about a year it was like that and after a while we were like, *we need a break, we have families we would like to see* [laughing]. But it was wonderful. I was young and I wasn't married at the time so I had a lot more freedom to go. But I just learned so much from him. When you first went into that salon, there were three booths, there was a barber in the first one and he put me in the second one and he was in the third one. He had a mirror where he could see everything that I was doing. And if I was doing something that he thought was wrong, maybe I was doing a haircut that he thought I could do a better way, he would just quietly come around the corner and say, "Try it this way." He was so good about teaching you but not making you feel like you were stupid. And he was just very quiet about it. He was really good. I'll forever

be grateful to him. I worked for him for about five years. He actually put a salon here. But this is closer to where I live. I live twenty-three miles west of Lewisburg, then he sold the salon, so rather than go back to White Sulphur [Springs] and work for him by that time I had already had a clientele built up in Lewisburg and I didn't want to drive all the way back to White Sulphur again, so I stayed here.

CT: Do you prefer the term hairstylist, hairdresser, beautician...do you care?

TS: I like the "hairstylist" or "hairdresser" more than "beautician."

CT: Hair is so important in terms of how we look and how we feel about ourselves. People make so many assumptions about who you are based on your hair.

TS: Absolutely.

CT: It's so important. I'm wondering if people come in and maybe they're going through a life change and want to radically change their style. How often does that happen?

TS: Probably not real often but if I have someone who comes in and they say, "I'm thinking about doing something really different." And they've just thought about it, through experience, I've learned to say, "Let's talk about it. And you might want to wait until the next time. Let's be *sure* you want to do this." Because sometimes people can make a spur-of-the-minute decision and then they really regret it, especially if it's a huge change.

CT: How often do you suggest any major changes?

TS: [long pause] That's a good question. It kind of depends on the individual...their age or their profession...those kinds of things factor into it.

CT: Why would age factor....?

TS: Most of my older customers probably don't want to change as often as the younger ones. They're always wanting to be up-to-the-minute with styling and so forth.

CT: Okay. In your experience approximately what percentage of your clients want hair that they don't have?

TS: [chuckles] Oh, let's see....probably 75% of the people, maybe 80% [laughing] of the people, probably 80 to 90% actually [laughing harder]. Because you always have someone who comes in and they have curly hair and of course they pick out the straight style and vice-versa. We all want what we don't have. That's what keeps me in a job. [laughing]

CT: Exactly. What lengths are clients willing to go to in order to achieve that look? Do you have to put limits on that? How does that work out?

TS: Sometimes, because some people pick out things that...simply they do not have the hair to do and you just have to be honest with them. If I'm not honest with them they are going to think I don't know what I'm doing. You know what I mean? Especially the women who have extremely fine, thin hair, so of course they want something that's a lot fuller and it's just not going to work. So you just have to say, "This is not going to work." But sometimes it does, depending on how much time they are willing to put into a style. And that's something too that you definitely have to go over with a client. For example, to have curly hair and they want it straight. You know [she tells them], "You're going to have to flat iron this. And this is going to take an extra thirty minutes everyday. Are you willing to devote that much time to it?"

CT: Over the years what are the most popular celebrities that people want to look like?

TS: Jennifer Aniston. Her hairstyle was extremely popular. Back when I first graduated, Farrah Fawcett was the style, everyone wanted it and I had it too [laughing]. So those were the two big ones.

CT: Have there been any since Jennifer Aniston?

TS: Tom Cruise's ex, what's her name?

CT: Katie Holmes?

TS: Yes, Katie Holmes. I have people who want Katie Holmes' hairstyle.

CT: What does she have bangs? I don't even know what her hair looks like.

TS: The last time I saw her...

CT: Is it more of a bob?

TS: Yes.

CT: And she has darker hair.

TS: Yes.

CT: Interesting.

TS: Hallie Berry. Oh and of course she's gorgeous. I have several customers who want a Hallie Berry style.

CT: Who are white?

TS: No.

CT: Who are black.

TS: Yes.

CT: Yes, I think most people just want to look like Hallie Berry. I've heard that. Her hairstyle is one of the most popular [for black women]. Did you happen to see Chris Rock's documentary *Good Hair*?

TS: No.

CT: Okay. Can you talk about your customers? It's obviously a small community, how much are they a part of your life, if at all.

TS: I have customers that I have done for thirty-two years. As soon as I got out of school they came to me and they've been coming to me ever since. So we do become friends. And those that I see on a regular basis, say every three to six or seven weeks, depending on the individual, you get to know that person very well and so many of them don't change their style every time. So I get to know all about them, their families, the things that they like and don't like, of course they are curious about my family as well. [They are] so kind. I just have wonderful, wonderful customers. Probably one of the hardest things is seeing them get older. There are so many that started with me. Of course, I was nineteen and they were say fifty and it's so hard for me to see them going through all the life changes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, you know all these really sad things that happen as we age, so that's the hard part about it. But I'm invited to anniversaries and different celebrations, weddings...so in a smaller community we kind of become intertwined like that.

CT: Have you lost any?

TS: Oh yes, I sure have, through the years. And going to a funeral home to do their hair is so hard. The first one that I had to do, I was not out of school that long and it was one of my regular customer's mother and I had only done her hair a couple of times so I didn't have as much of a connection with her. But I was really nervous about doing it and I talked to my mother about it and she said, "Terri, that's the last nice thing that you can really do for someone and think of the comfort that it gives to the family to see their loved one look so nice. It's just a shell, they're not really there." So I did go to the funeral home and I did her hair and the letter that I got from her daughter was wonderful. [It said] how much it meant to them that I did that. So I've done that several times through the years.

CT: Does the customer have a conversation with you? Or in a passing statement say "When I die, I want you to do my hair." Or is it more serious, like "I don't think I have much time..."

TS: Both. Yes, that's the hard part. I'll tell you a little story. Just about two months ago, I had a customer who had been a customer for years and years, had an appointment with me like on Thursday, the funeral home called me on Tuesday. I did not know that she had passed away, [the funeral home] called wanting to know if I could come and do her hair

on Thursday. It was so odd. I was still doing her hair on the same day she had an appointment with me [laughing}, it was just a different location, you know. But she was an elderly lady and she had a wonderful life and she just peacefully passed away in her sleep so you can't feel too bad for someone who's lived a long, healthy life.

CT: Yes, that's a blessing for sure.

TS: Yes. Indeed.

CT: And how much do your customers actually reveal about themselves? Do they treat you kind of like a therapist? Is it sometimes too much?

TS: Sure. Sometimes I'm surprised what people will tell. One funny story, this was years ago. I had a husband and wife and I do whole families. Sometimes I have three generations that I do. But I had a husband and wife that I did on a regular basis and their three children. And the husband comes in first and says, "Well I guess you know the wife has had an affair on me." I said, "Oh, no. I didn't know that." And I'm trying to not...you know I don't want to get too involved [laughing]. So anyway, I cut his hair and he leaves. A couple of days later, his wife comes in. "Did you know that my husband's having an affair on me?" So both of them are telling the same story about each other so I never did find out what really happened! [laughing]

CT: In such a small town...

TS: I think they were both trying to get the word out on the other one first.

CT: So how much do you share about yourself?

TS: I share about my family. I have two sons, I'm married and we have a farm, we have cattle...they all know that about me. I don't get real personal about myself but they always want to know about how my family, how my boys are, they're very caring. I have a wonderful client base, they're very good to me.

CT: I was sorry to hear about your friend and partner Lisa. Can you talk about her and how her illness was handled?

TS: Sure, Lisa and I worked together for...my goodness, probably about seventeen years together and we worked for someone else. And as I had written [on the pre-questionnaire form] we had decided to go into business for ourselves so we had bought it together. Lisa was only about thirty-eight, her mother had breast cancer and she had two aunts that had breast cancer as well. She had two children, has two children...Lisa is still living. When it first happened it was quite a shock but by the time the doctors found it, it was quite advanced so she didn't go through any treatments while she was working because it was already stage four, so she had to go immediately and have a lot of heavy duty treatments and so she had to get out of the business almost immediately. So I ended up buying her half out and I've been the sole owner since then. But because of Lisa, and I lost a sister to breast cancer too, you'll see I've got a few signs around that

promote Mammography so we try to use that as a tool. Lisa did have a Mammogram but it wasn't picked up with that. She doesn't have a real good quality of life right now but she's still here. The most important thing to her is to see her girls grow up. She's a survivor. She's tough.

CT: I'm sorry to hear about that, and your sister as well. Have any organizations approached you...because there are some organizations that work with hair salons to help spread the word about certain issues...

TS: A few years ago, the hospital down in Fairlea. They have a room where they have wigs and people can go and choose a wig if they're having treatments. So through the years they've brought me wigs, slightly used or new wigs to wash and style and get ready to take down to the hospital. So that's a good service. Though the years, of course I've had customers who have gone through treatments and I helped them with their hairstyles either choosing wigs, the color and so forth, until they can get through it and we can get them back on track again.

CT: Have you been there to help them shave their head when...

TS: Yes. It's hard. I went through it with my own mother too, my mother and my sister and several customers through the years.

CT: Do you find that there is more cancer in this area?

TS: I don't know, I don't know. My mother had non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, my sister had breast cancer so they had two completely different types of cancer but it just seems like you hear so much more of it now everywhere. It's scary.

CT: It is. You just have to be grateful.

TS: Absolutely.

CT: So you said that 95% of your customers are white, what are the remaining 5%?

TS: Black.

CT: Any other races? Asian?

TS: Yes, I have just a few, probably two or three who are Asian and one who's French but she's lived here about thirty years.

CT: How important are tips?

TS: Oh very important.

CT: Is it similar to waitressing. Is 15% is good and is 20%....

TS: Sure you know but it's funny, not everyone tips you I treat everyone the same regardless. And I find that the wealthiest people don't tip as much as the hard working people do. Your hard working waitresses and people who work in the service profession always tip the best. I tip very well whenever I go and eat because I know what it's like to be in the service profession and how much that's appreciated. But at Christmas, people are really good to me. I get *tons* of gifts at Christmas. So that's great.

CT: You said that you do a lot of hair color. Can you talk about the timing skills you need to apply hair color? Do you only have one person that you're doing at a time? Can you walk me through the steps?

TS: Ok, usually if I'm doing a color, I may book her at 10:00. I'll take approximately, maybe fifteen minutes to apply the color and she will have to process for say twenty to thirty minutes. While she's processing, I'll have another color [client] come in, I'll put her color on. By the time I have her processing I'm ready to rinse the first one and go ahead and cut and style her hair, while the next one's processing. So I do work a couple of them together, sometimes three, depending on what I'm doing.

CT: Do you have an assistant to help you in case something goes...

TS: Vicki and I and the other gal we all kind of just help each other out. But being a smaller salon, no, we don't have assistants. If one of us gets behind the other kind of jumps in [and says] "I'll shampoo her for you." We work together like that.

CT: What hair color do you use the most?

TS: I probably use a level eight the most, which is about a medium blonde. And I do a lot of highlights, which are more of a pale blonde.

CT: So mostly blonde. How many natural blondes have you seen?

TS: Not that many [laughing]. I don't know. That's a good question. Probably there are more brown to brunettes than there are real natural blondes and especially a very pale blonde, you don't see very many pale blondes.

CT: I think there are only like 3%...

TS: Yeah it's a very small...

CT: [Looking at the pre-questionnaire] You list here the different products that you use, you do hair relaxers here. Do you use those on your black clients or do you also use it on white...

TS: Some.

CT: Yes, Jewish, Sicilian, Italian can have curly hair.

TS: Yes.

CT: How often do you use it on white clients?

TS: Not very often. Most of my white clientele that has curly hair they either go natural with it or they thermally straighten it or thermally curl it with a flat iron or something like that. I try to work with their hair. It's so much easier. Women today are so busy, they don't have an hour to spend on their hair everyday. I encourage them to use what they have, enhancing it maybe with color or products. I color my hair, I highlight it but I don't perm it or anything. I have a little bit of natural curl so I just go with that rather than spend a lot of time on it.

CT: And what about for your black clients?

TS: Most of them get relaxers, almost all of them. I have one who is wearing her hair real short right now, she's doing a Hallie Berry style, she's a beautiful woman, so it looks really good on her. But most of the others prefer relaxers.

CT: How comfortable are you working with kinky hair? Because one thing I have found is that salons are still somewhat segregated by race.

TS: Right, right.

CT: I've been to really high-end salons in San Francisco but they couldn't do my hair. I had my hair ruined actually. I had to walk out and cut it all off and they were trained; they were great hairstylists for a particular type of hair texture. So I'm assuming in beauty school you learned how to apply a relaxer but for your black clients do you have any challenges around working with kinky hair?

TS: Well you can have challenges with any head of hair. I feel comfortable with it because I've been doing it so many years. If it's excessively kinky it's a little bit harder to deal with, especially if they want it to be really straight. I have wonderful products that I use, but sometimes it's so hard to get it *real* straight. Does that answer your question?

CT: Yes. So what stigmas, if any, do you think are tied to doing hair for a living?

TS: I think years ago probably we were thought of how some of the waitresses felt. [They think] *You didn't have to go to college for that, it's a trade*. And occasionally you'll run up on someone where you'll kind of get that feeling from them [lowers her voice] *you're just a hairdresser* [laughing] but not that often. I think that we've come a long way.

CT: You think that's changing?

TS: I do. I do. I think that hairdressers have changed other people's perspectives on our profession. Does that make sense? We're more probably educated than we were maybe

fifty years ago. We do have a more diverse clientele than probably even thirty years ago and I think maybe people's perceptions in general have just changed about different professions, you know. It kind of depends on the person.

CT: Yeah, I think it's changing too. I wanted to talk a little about the physical labor of the job. What if any parts of your body are more affected than others?

TS: I have osteoarthritis in this thumb joint. And it's from all the years from this motion [she gestures] and I have carpal tunnel syndrome. I have arthritis but that's probably just with age. Bending over a shampoo bowl affects your back.

CT: Upper back or lower back?

TS: Both. Usually upper back. Knees, legs from standing for years and years. Because for years I've worked nine, sometimes ten hours a day. Even though we have a mat, it's still a lot of standing but I'm getting older too, so [laughing]. The worst thing is probably your hands. And I have arthritis in my shoulder, elbows and muscle spasms sometimes, not real often, but sometimes I have to have my back worked on and have to have it readjusted. When you have your arms up all the time, it kind of pulls things out of whack.

CT: Yes, the stylists that I've interviewed so far, probably about 80% of them say that it's really important to condition their body to do this work. They have to go and get massages and get adjusted so that their body can handle it. Are you concerned at all about the toxicity of the chemicals that you use?

TS: Sure. Well one of the hair shows I've gone to, probably fifteen years ago, they said that lung cancer is up in hairdressers, compared to what it had been before. But I don't dwell on it because I feel like with any occupation, it would be something. If I had a desk job working with a computer then I'd probably have a different type of problem. It's pretty well ventilated in here, when we're using chemicals you can smell them but they're not super strong. I can't breathe the nail products, the nail adhesive products, they're really strong. I don't think that our products are quite as strong as those. So we don't use those in here because of that. But you know when I'm doing a color I don't want to get right on top of it [laughing] because the fumes do come right up in your face so I stand back just a little bit as I'm applying it. So sure, I worry about it but what can you do? [laughing]

CT: I guess you can worry about all kinds of things.

TS: Yeah, you can't dwell on it.

CT: What are some of the more serious topics that are discussed in the salon?

TS: Oh politics, of course, now what we're coming up on an election. That's a big one. And health issues. I hear a lot about health issues. Especially my clientele that's been

with me so long, of course they're getting older and I'm getting older, so I can relate [laughing]. But I would say probably politics.

CT: So if there are more than one or two clients here, do they talk amongst each other or is it just that you're only engaging with your clients?

TS: They sometimes talk with each other. I try to be friendly with whoever comes in, but I try to devote all my attention to that one particular person I'm working on. But they do converse with each other because it's small and almost everyone that comes in knows...a lot of people know each other.

CT: So do they mostly agree on politics?

TS: Oh, no. Not always [laughing]. And some are very outspoken about it too.

CT: Is it mostly Republican or Democrat?

TS: No, it's a democratic state, so mostly democrats.

CT: So how often does the topic of race come up, if ever?

TS: No, hardly not.

CT: So are we in the Appalachian Mountains?

TS: Sure.

CT: Ok, so can you talk about what it's like living in Appalachia because the assumptions and a lot of the stereotypes about this area are...

TS: Oh it is disheartening to hear the news media or comedians or whoever it may be talk about the "hillbillies" or West Virginians. And a lot of times, if they do come to this state to do a story it seems like they try to find the poorest and the worst house [laughing] they can find to take a picture of which further, of course, enhances that stereotype. That's kind of bothersome sometimes, but once people have traveled to the state they see how beautiful it is and how nice the people are. There are poor, illiterate people everywhere. We don't have a corner on that market. We have very well educated people as well as uneducated people, just like anywhere. The one thing I can say is that I've never seen anyone homeless, in Lewisburg anyway. I've never seen anyone homeless in Beckley, like you would in D.C. I've been to D.C. and I've seen homeless people there. So sometimes that bothers me a little bit. But people here don't say anything. Sometimes, we'll joke about it, if we hear something in the media.

CT: Are there class issues within the community?

TS: Lewisburg is an old town and sometimes people joke about the old money in Lewisburg because there are a lot of wealthy people, very wealthy people in Lewisburg.

It doesn't seem to affect me because I'm not a real wealthy person so [laughing]. But Lewisburg is an old historical town. I don't know what to say.

CT: I'm just wondering if you have clients here...I don't even *know* if they have Hollers here, like in Kentucky, forgive my ignorance, or what they call "mountain people." Is that a negative term? Do you have clients who are from more rural areas and they've gone to college and made their way up the social ladder or....?

TS: Probably most of West Virginia would be considered rural. I live twenty-three miles west of Lewisburg in a tiny community. We have a 122-acre farm. We have cattle, so I definitely live in a rural community. So almost anything outside of downtown Lewisburg would be considered a rural community. So I have people from all over who come in. I don't think I have anyone that comes to see me from way back in the mountains, but people live far out, really away from town.

CT: So is it pretty segregated for people who do live in the poor areas?

TS: Sure. Sure it is. It's like that here too, like it is everywhere. I don't think it's as distinctive here as it is some other places, maybe because it's smaller. If you drive, on your way in here you probably saw some lovely homes, beautiful homes.

CT: Yes.

TS: If you were to go back that way and keep going you would see multi-million dollar homes. So you have everything here too. Like you do everywhere, very poor to very, very rich, just depending on where you're at.

CT: So would you say most of your clients are in the middle?

TS: I would say that most of my clients are middle and upper class Americans, just average hardworking people.

CT: What would you say is the biggest cost associated with owning a salon?

TS: The overhead expenses as far as rent, utilities are probably at the top of the list. Products are very expensive now and whenever the price of gas goes up it affects everything we use. Every time we get a shipment in, the hairspray costs more, the color costs more, so products have really risen a lot, probably in the last ten years.

CT: That's interesting. One stylist said, "There is no limit to what women will pay to get their hair done." Is that your experience?

TS: Well I don't know if I would say there's no limit but women will pay a lot to get what they want. I'll tell you what one of my customers told me, she asked about the economy and if it affected my business and I said, "I think the only difference that I have seen is that a few people may space their appointments out a little farther. So instead of coming every four weeks they're jumping it up to every six weeks, but they're still

coming here.” One woman said, “Terri, I will miss a meal but I will not miss getting my hair done.” [laughing] So I do think that the beauty industry is probably one that maybe has not been affected as much as some of the others.

CT: That’s hilarious. What’s the most old-fashioned technique that you do?

TS: Roller-set. Wet roller-set under the dryer.

CT: That’s how I do my hair.

TS: Sure.

CT: It takes less time overall.

TS: And it probably lasts you so much longer, that’s the main reason why women have that done, it just stays a lot longer.

CT: It seems like it’s more labor for the hairdresser to do the newer... flat ironing, and the curling ironing...

TS: Oh yeah...

CT: And then for the client it takes longer but in my experience it doesn’t last as long so why do you think the roller-set is less popular?

TS: Probably because years ago almost all women had roller-sets, we didn’t have the blow dryers and all the styling tools that we have now. Like my mother for example, when she was my age she always rolled her hair up on rollers, but today women my age, mostly blow it dry. I don’t think most of my clientele would want to take the time to sit underneath the hairdryer, even though it may take as long to do their hair standing in front of the mirror I don’t think they feel like they’re spending as much time. Does that make sense? I don’t know. And then they probably don’t have the dryers at home like we have here.

CT: I had to order mine from Europe.

TS: [chuckle] Did you?

CT: Yeah and get the transmitter because it’s a European plug. And it’s a nightmare too because I can’t really do my hair on the road. I interviewed a Sicilian woman who did my hair and thank God, because I had been on the road for weeks. But when I’m home every week I just sit under the hairdryer, and it takes a little more than an hour, but I work on my computer and then at night I just put it up in pin curls and it only takes me five minutes to do my hair everyday.

TS: Right, so you’ve got a technique down that works for you really well. Your hair is beautiful.

CT: Well thank you that means a lot coming from a professional. So I just have a few basic questions left. Do you have health insurance?

TS: No, now that's a drawback to being self-employed and owning a small salon of course I can't offer it to any employees either. I have health insurance through my husband's job. And I don't think I've ever had health insurance through a salon.

CT: What about your plans for retirement?

TS: [speaking softly] I don't know if I'll ever be able to retire [laughing].

CT: Does your husband have a pension?

TS: He does. I have a CD in the bank, so I have saved money through the years. My husband works for the state so.

CT: And you own your ranch with your husband?

TS: Hmm mmm.

CT: You have two children?

TS: I do. I have a fifteen year old who is a sophomore in high school and I have an eighteen year old who just started college, he's going to the community college actually.

CT: What is he going to study?

TS: Criminal law, criminal justice and law enforcement. [She looks at her watch] Oh my customer's going to be here.

CT: Good, we're about done. Is there anything you wanted to talk about that I didn't ask?

TS: Most of the time, I think women are very easy to deal with. Occasionally you get someone that's not. If we get someone who sits in our chair and they say, "Well, you were recommended to me by so and so, but I've been..." And they've been all over the country and no one made them happy. You just want to say, "I'm probably not going to make you happy either." When I first started working that really bothered me because I would try so hard and it really kind of hurt my feelings but after a while you learn, it's not me, it's them [laughing]. There's something going on with her and she's not going to be happy, no matter where she goes.

I had one [customer] call up one time and she said, "I want a hairstyle that I don't have to do *anything* to. I want to be able to get in the shower and wash it and get out and I don't have to touch it. And I thought, well I'd like to have one of those too but short of

shaving your head, you're going to have to do something to it! [laughing]. It's funny sometimes the things people say.

CT: They kind of want you to be a miracle worker.

TS: Yeah. Absolutely. I have a sign that one of my customers got me that says, "I'm a beautician, not a magician." Another sign I've got says, "No Parking. All others will be teased." It's really cute. But people basically are wonderful and it's nice to have a job that I really love. I enjoy coming here everyday. Sometimes, like with everything, you get a little burned out. I don't think I get as burned out with what I do as much as I get overwhelmed with not being able to keep up with everything at home as well as here. With two teenagers at home and a husband, well with what everyone has to deal with. But I love what I do and I'm very fortunate, really. And I would probably do it again. My cousin asked me that one time, she said, "If you could change your mind and do anything else, what would you do?" I said, "Probably the same thing." She said, "Really!?" I said, "Yeah!"

[Her client Karen walks in and we end the interview]